

PUGET SOUND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

April 29, 2013 | End of the 105-day regularly scheduled legislative session

This Legislative Update highlights the issues impacting our region's work to protect and restore the health of Puget Sound. Previous editions are available online at www.psp.wa.gov.

WEEKLY REVIEW

Yesterday, the Legislature ended its 105-day regular session without adopting a two-year state budget. Gov. Inslee has called for a special session that will begin May 13.

The top differences boil down to the size of the budget and the need for taxes. The Republican-controlled Senate and Democrat-controlled House must decide whether or not to raise taxes to improve school funding and prevent further cuts to health and human services. Gov. Inslee pledged as a candidate to not sign into law new taxes and also campaigned on closing tax exemptions. The House approved some of his proposals as part of a revenue package, which is now in the hands of the Majority Coalition Caucus that controls the Senate.

So far, the House favors spending \$34.5 billion from the general fund and related accounts that pay for daily state operations, public schools, universities, prisons, courts, parks, and some health programs. Their plan includes approximately \$1.1 billion in revenue to balance the budget

The Senate favors spending \$33.35 billion that includes no new taxes, but relies on unproven savings assumptions and efficiency improvements. As negotiations continue, a new budget is needed before the next budget cycle, which begins July 1.

Bipartisan support for Puget Sound budget priorities

The Partnership's important role for protecting public tax dollars spent on Puget Sound is strongly supported—including funding for developing levee vegetation demonstration pilot projects in King and Whatcom counties, advancing Puget Sound steelhead recovery efforts, and supporting ongoing adaptive management efforts.

Bipartisan support continues for many of the other highest-ranked Puget Sound budget priorities. As negotiations between the House and Senate continue, it is important for partners to continue to be vigilant and vocal.

2013 SESSION AT A GLANCE

This will be the last regularly published Puget Sound Legislative Update. Special editions will be sent to you as the House, Senate and Governor's Office progress with budget negotiations.

Next Cutoff: Special legislative session scheduled to begin on May 13.

Information:

- For up-to-date legislative information, visit: www.leg.wa.gov
- To watch or listen to a legislative hearing, visit: www.tvw.org
- For both current and previous copies of the Legislative Update, visit: www.psp.wa.gov

Communication and Coordination:

If you are planning to testify on a bill, meet with legislators, or would like assistance with state legislative issues regarding Puget Sound priorities—please contact:

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The April 12 edition of the Puget Sound Legislative Update highlights the Puget Sound priorities and the differences between the Senate, House and Governor’s proposals. You can read it here:

www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/4_12_LegislativeUpdate.pdf

Strong support needed for Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration

Throughout our region, there is strong support to fully fund Puget Sound’s number one Capital Budget priority—the Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration (PSAR) account at \$80 million.

PSAR advances the regionally adopted Puget Sound goals—implementing the science-based watershed plans developed and prioritized by a broad regional coalition of local jurisdictions, Tribes, environmental groups, businesses, farmers, and state and federal agencies.

Legislators appreciate hearing from their constituents. Read some of the letters our partners have sent in support of fully funding PSAR:

- **Leadership Council, Salmon Recovery Board & Ecosystem Coordination Board:** http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/PSAR_Honeyford-Nelson-Dunshee-Warnick.pdf
- **Tulalip Tribe:** <http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/Tulalip%20Tribes%20PSAR%20support.pdf>
- **Makah Tribe:** http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/letters/MakahLOS_PSAR.pdf
- **Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe:** http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/letters/2013PSAR_JSKTletter_Apr24.pdf
- **Dungeness River Management Team:** http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/letters/DRMTSupport_PSAR_2013.pdf
- **Snoqualmie Watershed Forum:** <http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/letters/Snoqualmie%20Forum%20Letter%20to%20House%20Re%20PSAR%2004.24.2013.pdf>
- **WRIA 8:** http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/letters/WRIA8_Lower_Cedar_Integrated_Floodplain_letter_Sen_Hill_March2013.pdf
- **Pierce County Regional Council:** http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/legislative/2013/letters/2013PCR_CSupportLetterforPSAR.pdf

Puget Sound can't heal itself | Opinion, The Daily Herald

Dave Somers submitted the following Guest Editorial emphasizing the need for the Legislature to invest in restoring the health Puget Sound. Dave chairs the Partnership's Ecosystem Coordination Board and is a member of the Snohomish County Council. He is a fisheries biologist by training.

On a nice day, looking out from Everett across Port Gardner toward the Olympic Mountains, it is excusable to think all is well. The water is blue, the seagulls soar, and the boats cut back and forth. Do not be lulled by this vision.

To continue reading: <http://heraldnet.com/article/20130428/OPINION03/704289939/0/SEARCH>

LEGISLATION PERTINENT TO PUGET SOUND

SHELLFISH

Coastal Marine Advisory Council: Sen. Hatfield's legislation, [Senate Bill 5603](#), to establish the Washington coastal marine advisory council and the Washington marine resources advisory council, passed the House last week with an 82-to-12 vote, and now awaits the Governor's signature. The coastal council will serve as a forum on coastal issues such as fisheries, shellfish aquaculture, and ocean energy. The marine council will advance the recommendations from the ocean acidification report.

HABITAT

Landowner liability: This week, the House concurred with the Senate's amendments to Rep. Stanford's legislation to limit landowner liability for habitat projects, [House Bill 1194](#), and passed by a 77-to-18 vote. The bill has been delivered to the Governor's desk.

Conservation easements: Rep. Sawyer's legislation allowing tribes to hold conservation easements, [House Bill 1277](#), advanced out of the Senate on April 18 by a 48-to-0 vote, with one amendment. The House concurred last week by a 73-to-21 vote and awaits the Governor's signature.

Aquatic invasive species: Sen. Honeyford's aquatic invasive species legislation, [Substitute Senate Bill 5702](#), passed the House floor last week by a 95-to-1 vote, and has been delivered to the Governor for signing. The bill would make it illegal to transport recreational or commercial watercraft into the state without meeting certain invasive species documentation requirements. It also repeals the Aquatic Nuisance Species Committee.

TOXICS

Derelict vessels: On Tuesday, April 23, the House concurred with the Senate's amendments to Rep. Hansen's derelict vessel legislation, [Substitute House Bill 1245](#), and it passed with a 95-to-2 vote. The bill creates a study group to analyze and propose improvements to marine policies regarding derelict vessels. We appreciate the Washington State Legislature, Department of Natural Resources and many other partner organizations for passing this important legislation to prevent and better manage derelict vessels. Attention remains on the budget proposals, which includes \$2 million in the Operating Budget for the derelict vessel program and \$10 million in the Capital Budget to expedite removal of the more than 230 older, larger, more expensive ships that threaten the health of Puget Sound.

Model Toxics Control Account (MTCA): On April 22 the Senate passed [Senate Bill 5296](#), with a 25-to-23 vote, and was referred to the House Environment Committee where it may or may not re-emerge depending on leverage and status regarding budget negotiations. Senate Bill 5296 would reorganize state MTCA accounts with the intent of making it more difficult to sweep funds away from cleanup and prevention projects. The bill now includes language from Sen. Ranker's brownfields legislation, Senate Bill 5201. The most important need is for a comprehensive, interim review of MTCA investments to ensure the highest priorities and most cost-effective strategies are funded to protect and clean up Puget Sound.